

Appln No. 10/672,156
Amdt date March 2, 2005
Reply to Office action of February 17, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A knife comprising:

a knife body having a top edge, a bottom edge, a proximal edge, a distal edge and a midsection between the top, bottom, proximal and distal edges, wherein the knife body has a slot extending at least a part of the way through the midsection along the length of the knife body, the slot extending all the way through the width of the knife body:

a fixed knife blade extending from the bottom edge of the knife body and having left and rights sides; and

a blade cover slidably mounted in the slot, the blade cover having at least one connecting portion that extends all the way through the slot and two downwardly extending side portions attached to the at least one connecting portion, wherein the blade cover is [moveable] slidable within the slot between a first position where the two downwardly extending side portions cover the left and right sides of the blade and a second position where the two downwardly extending side portions do not cover the sides of the blade.

2. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, further comprising a handle extending from the knife body

3. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the slot extends completely through the width of the knife body.

4. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the side portions comprises an outer body defining an inner opening in which an inner body is hingedly mounted to the outer body.

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5. (Original) The knife according to claim 4, wherein the inner body includes on an inner surface thereof a protrusion that is mateable with distal and proximal notches on a corresponding side surface of the knife body, such that, in use, when the blade cover is positioned over the blade, the protrusion mates with the distal notch, and when the protrusion mates with the proximal notch, the blade cover is not positioned over the blade.

6. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein each side portion comprises an outer body defining an inner opening in which an inner body is hingedly mounted to the outer body.

7. (Original) The knife according to claim 6, wherein each inner body includes on an inner surface thereof a protrusion that is mateable with distal and proximal notches on a corresponding side surface of the knife body, such that, in use, when the blade cover is positioned over the blade, the protrusions on the inner bodies mate with the distal notches, and when the protrusions mate with the proximal notches, the blade cover is not positioned over the blade.

8. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein at least one side portion of the blade cover includes on an inner surface thereof a protrusion that is mateable with distal and proximal notches on a corresponding side surface of the knife body, such that, in use, when the blade cover is positioned over the blade, the protrusion mates with the distal notch, and when the protrusion mates with the proximal notch, the blade cover is not positioned over the blade.

9. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the side portions of the blade cover each include on an inner surface thereof a protrusion that is mateable with distal and proximal notches on a corresponding side surface of the knife body, such that, in use, when the blade cover is positioned over the blade, the protrusions mate with the distal notches, and when the protrusions mate with the proximal notches, the blade cover is not positioned over the blade.

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10. (Previously Presented) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the connecting portion of the blade cover comprises one or more male-female connectors that join the side portions to each other.

11. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the blade cover has a length greater than the length of the blade.

12. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the side portions of the blade cover, when positioned over the blade, have bottom edges that extend beyond a bottom edge of the blade.

13. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the bottom edge of the body is curved along its entire width.

14. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, further comprising an angled protrusion extending outwardly from a side of the knife body, the angled protrusion including an outer surface that angles away from the body in a proximal direction and a generally flat proximal surface at the proximal end of the angled surface.

15. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the knife body has a width ranging from about 1 mm to about 5 mm.

16. (Original) The knife according to claim 15, wherein the knife body has a width ranging from about 2 mm to about 3 mm.

17. (Original) The knife according to claim 15, wherein the bottom edge of the knife body has a width greater than the width of the midsection of the knife body.

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18. (Original) The knife according to claim 1, wherein the knife blade is not moveable relative to the knife body.